

## Tissue Viability Team

# How you can help your wounds to heal

Wounds heal more quickly if the right conditions are in place. Unhealthy diet and infection can cause poor wound healing.

### Diet

Eating well can make a huge difference to your wounds and will encourage them heal.

Try to eat a varied diet and regular meals unless you are on a restricted or special diet. Foods containing protein, carbohydrates, vitamins, and minerals will be particularly useful.

### Protein

Protein can be found in dairy products such as milk, cheese, eggs, meat, fish, soya, nuts, beans and pulses.

### Carbohydrates

Carbohydrates can be found in potatoes, cereals, bread, pasta, and rice.

Other sources of carbohydrate are biscuits, sweets, cakes, and chocolate. These can be included if your appetite is poor.

### Vitamins

Vitamin C can be found in fruit, vegetables, salad, and fruit juices. All of these will help towards your 5 portions a day.



## Patient Information

### **Minerals**

Iron can be found in red meat, chicken, and turkey. Eggs, beans, pulses, fortified breakfast cereals, nuts and green vegetables are also good sources.

Iron is absorbed better when a good source of vitamin C is taken at the same time.

Zinc can be found in cereals, fish, and meat.

### **Help with your diet**

Take advice from the nursing, medical staff, or your dietitian if you are unsure as to what you can eat.

If you have a small appetite and you are struggling with meals, you may be advised to eat small meals and snacks between meals.

### **Supplement drinks**

Your doctor or dietitian may prescribe you supplement drinks.

Try and drink all the supplements you are given. They will really help your wound to heal.

### **Fluids**

Fluids are essential to stop the skin from becoming dry and inelastic and therefore more likely to be damaged.

Aim to drink 8 to 10 cups of fluid per day.

Any non-alcoholic will provide fluids. Milky drinks will also provide extra calories and protein.

## Patient Information

### **Alcoholic drinks**

Alcoholic drinks will cause dehydration and are not counted in your daily intake. There is support available to help you if your alcohol intake is above the recommended guidelines.

### **Mobility**

Keep as mobile as possible in bed and when sitting in a chair.

The more mobile you are the less likely you are to get complications such as blood clots, pressure ulcers (bedsores) or chest infections. These can all lead to an increase in the length of your stay in hospital and will increase your nutritional needs.

### **Pain relief**

Take regular pain relief tablets if you need them.

If you are in pain, you will not want to move or eat, and your rehabilitation could be delayed.

### **Infection**

Do not touch your wound. This can make a wound infection much more likely.

If there are dressings on your wound, do not remove them. The ward staff will check them and remove them if needed.

Let the nursing or medical staff know if:

- your wound is oozing
- the dressing becomes wet at any time
- you experience an increased amount of pain from the wound
- there is an unusual smell from the wound
- there is an increase in redness around the wound

## Patient Information

### Stopping smoking

University Hospital has a dedicated Smoking Cessation Service that can provide medication and advice on how to give you the best chance of quitting smoking for good.

For more information ask a member of staff or contact Smoking Cessation Service on 0800 122 3780.

### More information

If you have any concerns about your wound or your care, you can speak to the nursing or medical staff looking after you.

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format, please contact 024 76966154 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smokefree policy.

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